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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/437,499	11/10/1999	TSUMORU MATSUURA	44376-028	8064

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[REDACTED] EXAMINER

WALLERSON, MARK E

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2622	

DATE MAILED: 02/12/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No. 09/437,499	Applicant(s) Matsuura et al
Examiner Mark Wallerson	Art Unit 2622



-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on Nov 27, 2002.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-23 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above, claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) 7, 8, 10, 11, 16, and 21-23 is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-6, 9, 12-15, and 17-20 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claims _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13) Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some* c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

*See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14) Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).
a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15) Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s). _____	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

Art Unit: 2622

Part III DETAILED ACTION

Notice to Applicant(s)

1. This action is responsive to the following communications: amendment filed on **11/27/2002**.

2. This application has been reconsidered. Claims 1-23 are pending.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless -

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371© of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) do not apply to the examination of this application as the application being examined was not (1) filed on or after November 29, 2000, or (2) voluntarily published under 35 U.S.C. 122(b). Therefore, this application is examined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

Art Unit: 2622

4. Claims 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Kida et al (Kida) (U. S. 5,852,764).

With respect to claims 1, 2, 3, 9, 12, 15, 17, and 20, Kida discloses an image forming apparatus (5) comprising a plurality of trays (53 and 59) for receiving discharged sheets bearing a formed image; means for selectively setting the form of output with respect to the plural trays (the abstract, lines 13-15), and forming an image on the sheets in the form of output set when the tray which the form of output has been set is selected as the discharge tray (column 19, lines 25-45 and column 5, line 36 to column 20, line 6).

With regard to claim 4, Kida discloses forming the images on the obverse and reverse side of a sheet (column 5, lines 54-63).

With respect to claim 5, Kida discloses forming plural images on the sheet (which reads on composite copying) (column 5, lines 41-59).

With regard to claims 13 and 14, Kida discloses setting the size of sheets to be discharged (column 28, lines 12-19).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person

Art Unit: 2622

having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kida in view of Matsui et al (Matsui) (U. S. 5,921,537).

With respect to claim 6, Kida differs from claim 6 in that he does not clearly disclose the plural trays are allocated to a specific user. Matsui discloses a printing system whereby bins are allotted to various operators (column 12, lines 57-65). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have modified Kida wherein the plural trays are allocated to a specific user. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have modified Kida by the teaching of Matsui in order to simplify the discharge process.

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. Claims 18 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kida in view of Taneda (U. S. 5,236,185).

With respect to claims 18 and 19, Kida differs from claims 18 and 19 in that he does not clearly disclose that the post handling includes stapling and punching. Taneda discloses an image forming method wherein post handling includes stapling and punching (column 6, lines 3-6).

Art Unit: 2622

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have modified Kida wherein post handling includes stapling and punching. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have modified Kida by the teaching of Taneda in order to improve the post processing capabilities.

Allowable Subject Matter

9. Claims 7, 8, 10, 11, 16, 21, 22, and 23 are allowed.

Response to Arguments

10. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-20 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

11. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new grounds of rejection. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See M.P.E.P. § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a).

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR RESPONSE TO THIS FINAL ACTION IS SET TO EXPIRE THREE MONTHS FROM THE DATE OF THIS ACTION. IN THE EVENT A FIRST RESPONSE IS FILED WITHIN TWO MONTHS OF THE MAILING DATE

Art Unit: 2622

OF THIS FINAL ACTION AND THE ADVISORY ACTION IS NOT MAILED UNTIL AFTER THE END OF THE THREE-MONTH SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD, THEN THE SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD WILL EXPIRE ON THE DATE THE ADVISORY ACTION IS MAILED, AND ANY EXTENSION FEE PURSUANT TO 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) WILL BE CALCULATED FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THE ADVISORY ACTION. IN NO EVENT WILL THE STATUTORY PERIOD FOR RESPONSE EXPIRE LATER THAN SIX MONTHS FROM THE DATE OF THIS FINAL ACTION.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Mark Wallerson whose telephone number is (703) 305-8581.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-4700.

Any response to this action should be mailed to:

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks
Washington, DC 20231

or faxed to:

(703) 872-9314 (for formal communications intended for entry)

(for informal or draft communications, such as proposed amendments to be discussed at an interview; please label such communications "PROPOSED" or "DRAFT")

or hand-carried to:

Crystal Park Two
2121 Crystal Drive
Arlington, VA.
Sixth Floor (Receptionist)

MARK WALLERSON
PRIMARY EXAMINER

Mark Wallerson